

School Facilities

The School Facilities element of the Mashpee Comprehensive Plan was developed by the Planning Department with the assistance of the School Superintendent and in consultation with the School Committee. It draws extensively from the 1992-3 work of the Educational Facilities Needs Committee (EFNC) appointed by the Board of Selectmen after the Falmouth School Committee notified Mashpee that their High School would no longer accept our incoming freshmen beginning in September, 1996.

The contents of the plan are intended to address three areas:

- development of the Town's overall land use plan as it relates to future school site needs,
- preparation of the capital facilities plan required for the LCP and for development of an impact fee system as they relate to school building needs and
- proper management of the Town's fiscal and other resources.

To achieve those intents, community opinion has been solicited, goals and objectives have been agreed to, existing facilities and programs have been inventoried, future needs have been projected, available options have been reviewed and an action plan and policies have been recommended regarding sites, facilities and, to a lesser extent, programs. Because it is primarily concerned with sites, facilities and other capital cost items, the plan does not address in any detail issues of educational philosophy or other subjects which are more appropriately left to the ongoing judgment of the School Committee and School Superintendent.

Community Goals & Objectives

Basic to the plan are a set of goals and objectives which were derived from those used by the EFNC and from the School Committee's Policy Manual. They were adopted by the Local Planning Committee (Planning Board) based on recommendations from the School Committee and Board of Selectmen. The draft was approved by the School Committee on February 1, 1995 and by the Selectmen, with amendments regarding compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, on February 3, 1995. After publication of the proposed goals and objectives in the local newspapers, a public hearing regarding the Goals, Objectives and Policies was held by the LPC on February 15, 1995 to receive comment from residents and other Town officials. After review of all comments received, the following Goals and Objectives were formally adopted by the Local Planning Committee on December 6, 1995:

- GOAL #1.** TO ENSURE APPROPRIATE FACILITIES FOR THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS EXPECTED IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM, AS WELL AS THE KINDS OF FACILITIES THAT BEST SUPPORT AND ACCOMMODATE A QUALITY EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM FOR THE TOWN.
- GOAL #2.** TO ENSURE THAT THE DEVELOPMENT AND OPERATION OF SCHOOL FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS ARE COORDINATED TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT POSSIBLE WITH THOSE OF OTHER MUNICIPAL AGENCIES.
- GOAL #3.** TO ENSURE THAT THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW SCHOOL FACILITIES NOT ONLY ASSISTS EACH MASHPEE CHILD IN REACHING HIS OR HER FULL POTENTIAL BUT ALSO ENHANCES LIFE-LONG LEARNING FOR MASHPEE ADULTS AS WELL.
- GOAL #4.** TO MAXIMIZE NON-PROPERTY TAX SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR SCHOOL FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS.
- GOAL #5.** TO ENSURE THAT THE GREATEST POSSIBLE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE TOWN'S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM ARE ACHIEVED IN RELATION TO THE DOLLARS EXPENDED.

Objectives:

- A. To maintain a clear understanding of existing and projected student populations and of resulting needs for school facilities and programs.
- B. To develop and maintain a coordinated plan for constructing and funding school facilities which is consistent with the Town's other planning goals and available revenues.
- C. To ensure the safety, health and welfare of all students in Mashpee's schools.
- D. To develop and maintain a physical environment in our school facilities which is conducive to a positive educational experience.
- E. To ensure maximum efficiency in the allocation of material and human resources in Mashpee's school system.
- F. To avoid school overcrowding and minimize the need for alternative educational scheduling.
- G. To ensure that school facilities are planned for simplicity of design, ease of maintenance, sound economics, high educational usefulness and flexibility and comply with all requirements of the Americans With Disabilities Act.
- H. To provide maximum opportunity for shared use of school facilities by other community groups and of other Town facilities by school groups.
- I. To ensure that the location of new school facilities is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the other goals, objectives, plans and policies of the Town, will minimize school transportation costs while encouraging the use of alternative transportation options such as walking and bicycling where feasible, will minimize noise, light, traffic and safety disruptions to existing residential neighborhoods and will enhance the social and visual fabric of the community.
- J. To secure any available federal, state or other grants, as well as development impact fees and other non-property tax revenues, to fund school facilities and programs.
- K. To ensure that the cultural as well as the life-long educational needs of the community are considered in planning school facilities and programs.

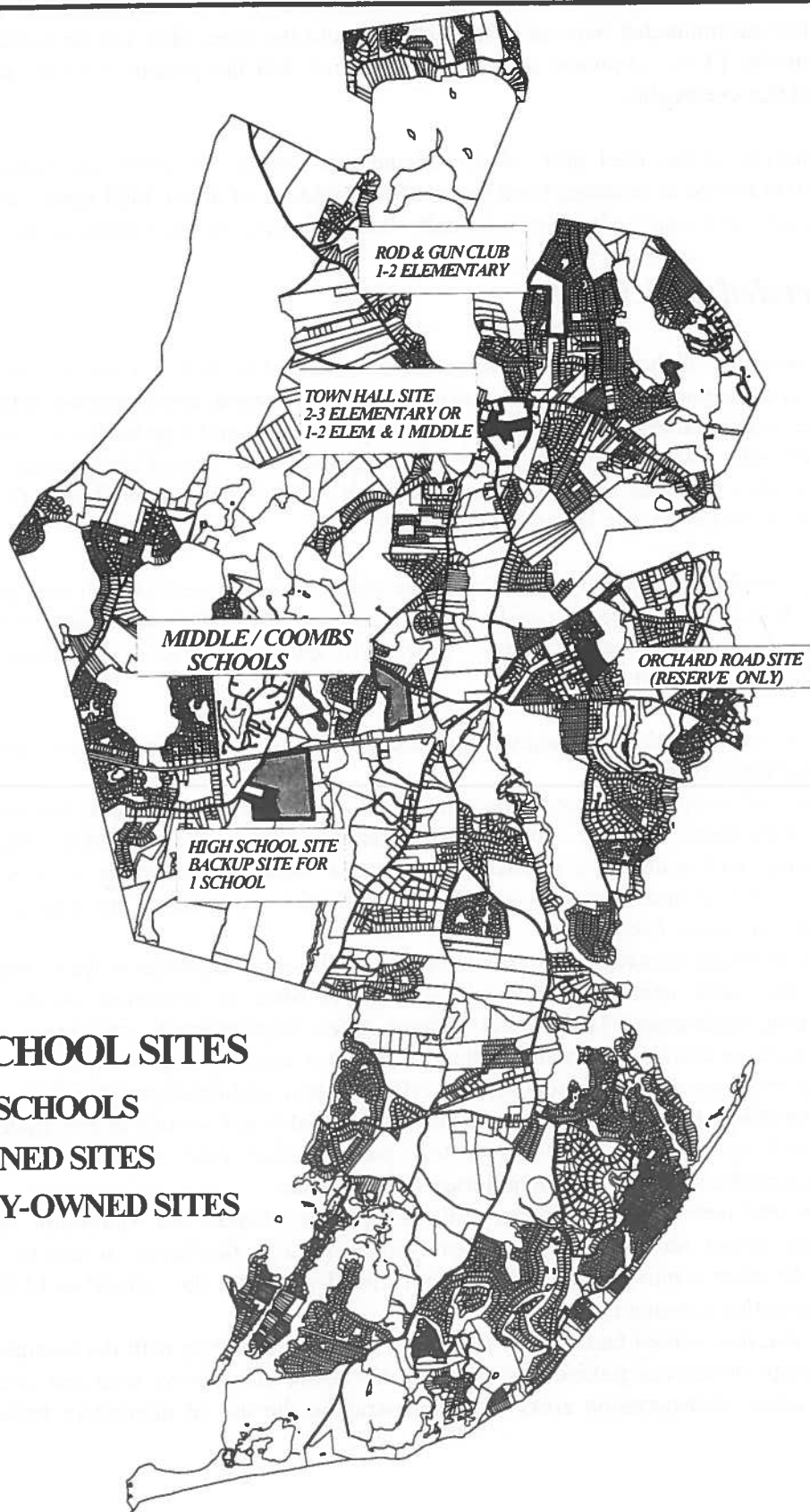
Inventory and Analysis

In developing the Plan, it was necessary to prepare an inventory of the Town's existing school facilities, which include a new 1180 student High School, the 550-650 student Kenneth C. Coombs elementary school and the 800-950 student Mashpee Middle School (which is now occupied by two grade K-6 elementary schools), and to project school enrollments to 2010 and at "buildout" of the town. Based on that work, an estimate was prepared of school facilities and sites which would be required to deal with the projected enrollments. Total students (including those at Cape Cod Tech and Falmouth High School) were 1916 in 1996. That number is projected to grow to 2399-3082 by 2010, depending on a number of factors, and to 4013 in typical years and 4379 in peak years after "buildout" of the town. The "buildout" projections indicate a need for an additional 73-77 classrooms for grade K-8 students and expansion of the High School to accommodate 1350 students.

A variety of options for dealing with the projected growth in enrollment were then analyzed. During the next decade, the key issue appears to be where to put our seventh graders, who will not fit into either the High School or the existing elementary / middle schools after 2003. Four alternative scenarios were described, with two appearing feasible. Both involve constructing a new grade K-6 school on a new site between 2002 and 2004. At "buildout", four system configuration alternatives are also possible, although two appear most appropriate. Both involve constructing three new schools on new sites. Available and suitable sites for the new schools were also addressed, with a 21-56 acre site behind Town Hall recommended for construction of the next school as well as one or two of the additional schools needed at "buildout". A second site recommended for one or two schools at buildout is the land currently owned by the Wampanoag Rod & Gun

RECOMMENDED SCHOOL SITES AT BUILDOUT

MAP 8-1



BUILDOUT SCHOOL SITES

- EXISTING SCHOOLS
- TOWN-OWNED SITES
- PRIVATELY-OWNED SITES

Club on South Sandwich Road. A land trade and payment is suggested which might be a win-win situation for both the Town and the Club as it would move the Club's firing range out of a densely populated area to a more suitable site and replace it with a school surrounded by our densest concentration of student population. 20 acres near Orchard Road near the Water District's "T-4" well and 20-25 acres near the High School are also recommended only as backup sites should the other sites not be available. However, in agreement with the EFNC's opinion, the plan recommends that the primary sites be acquired in the near future to avoid that eventuality.

During preparation of the final draft of this element in the fall of 1997, the School Committee and Superintendent indicated an eventual need for an office building, of about 3000 square feet in floor area, for the Superintendent and school administration staff. Such a facility has been added to the Action Plan.

Recommended Policies

The recommendations of the plan are presented in two parts. The first is a set of policies to be formally adopted by Town Meeting to guide the process of achieving the goals and objectives noted above. They are intended to be expressed either through new or revised bylaws and regulations or through the ongoing activities of the School Department and other Town agencies. The second part includes a long range plan recommending sites, facilities and system configuration at "buildout", as well as a five-year action plan listing activities to be undertaken between 1998 and 2002.

The following recommended policies, which are intended to be expressed through new or revised bylaws or regulations or through the ongoing regulatory or other activities of Town departments and boards, are intended to be formally adopted principles which will guide the process of achieving the goals and objectives identified previously.

1. To develop and maintain, with annual updates, a comprehensive database on current and projected school populations by grade.
2. To develop and maintain a coordinated plan for locating, constructing and funding school facilities which is consistent with the Town's other planning goals and available revenues, will avoid overcrowding, will maintain a physical environment which is conducive to a positive educational experience and will maximize efficiency in the allocation of material and human resources, and to update such plan every five years.
3. To conduct thorough structural and visual reviews of all school facilities at least once every five years, in conjunction with updates of the school facilities plan, to determine needs for rehabilitation, reconstruction, replacement, landscaping, signage, safety improvements, redesign to accommodate new grade structures or teaching methods or other structural or aesthetic improvements.
4. To develop, maintain and adequately fund an efficient and coordinated program for regular maintenance of school buildings and facilities to ensure the safety, health and welfare of our students, to maintain a physical environment which is conducive to a positive educational experience and to maximize the useful and cost-effective life of such buildings and facilities.
5. To require that new school buildings and facilities be planned for simplicity of design, ease of maintenance, sound economics, high educational usefulness, flexibility, access by disabled persons, shared use by other community groups and with consideration for the cultural and life-long educational needs of the entire community.
6. To require that new school facilities be located so as to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the other goals, objectives, policies and plans of the Town, to minimize land and construction costs, to minimize school transportation costs while encouraging the use of alternative transportation options

such as walking and bicycling, to minimize noise, light, traffic and safety disruptions to existing residential neighborhoods and to enhance the social and visual fabric of the community.

7. To seek any available federal, state or other grants or other non-property tax revenues to fund school facilities and programs and to include school facilities costs in any development impact fee program adopted by the Town.
8. To comply with all requirements of the Americans With Disabilities Act as they relate to school buildings and facilities.

Action Plan

In response to the recommended goals, objectives and policies listed previously and to the issues and problems identified in developing this plan element, the following specific actions are recommended, both in the next five years and over the long term, to ensure that Mashpee's educational needs are within the Town's financial resources:

Five Year Plan:

Year 1

- Update enrollment projections.
- Develop and implement school facility impact fee system.

Year 2

- Update enrollment projections.
- Establish School Building Needs Committee to review facility expansion alternatives, including review of administrative office needs and potential facilities, and make final recommendations on site and nature of next school facility, which is likely to be required between 2002 and 2004. A new K-6 grade elementary school adjacent to Town Hall is currently recommended.

Year 3

- Update enrollment projections.
- Acquire land for Town Hall school site.
- Acquire site for administrative offices, if necessary.
- Appoint School Building Committee for next school.
- Appropriate funds for next school design.
- Select architect for next school.

Year 4

- Update enrollment projections.
- Complete school design.
- Apply for state funding assistance for new school.
- Appropriate funds for new school construction.

Year 5

- Update enrollment projections.
- Begin construction of new school, to open in 2003-4.
- Appropriate funds for school administration building design.
- Select architect for school administration building.

Long Range Plan:

Based on an analysis of enrollment projections, it appears that Mashpee will eventually have to construct a number of new school facilities to meet projected enrollments at “buildout” of the Town. While those “buildout” enrollments may be affected by decisions the Town makes in coming years regarding open space acquisition, zoning and related factors which could reduce or enlarge our overall population potential, under current conditions and the recommendations of our Comprehensive Plan, the following facilities appear to be necessary at “buildout”, particularly during peak enrollment years:

- Use of temporary classrooms at the High School to accommodate 1350 9-12th graders in peak years.
- Three new 600 student K-6 schools or two K-6 and one 7-8 grade middle school.

Sufficient land must be set aside in the near future to ensure the availability of adequate sites for the three new schools which may be required. The following sites are recommended:

- A 56 acre site adjacent to Town Hall, of which 34 privately-owned acres require purchase, is recommended as the most appropriate location for at least two of the required schools.
- A second site which should be considered for construction of at least one school is the 32.9 acre parcel currently owned by the Wampanoag Rod & Gun Club. At such time as the site is needed, it is proposed that the Town trade with the Club for land it owns on Ashumet Road near Otis A.N.G.B. that would be very suitable for the Club’s firing range and other activities. Payment would also have to be made because the Town land is only 19 acres and because of costs associated with the Club having to move or rebuild its facilities.
- A 20 acre portion of an existing Town-owned parcel near Orchard Road might be kept in reserve in case additional facilities are required or the other sites cannot be acquired. It is not recommended for use except as a last resort because it lies adjacent to the Mashpee Water District’s “T-4” well.
- A 20-25 acre area of Town land adjacent to the High School might also be considered for school use, but appears to be more appropriately reserved for other Town uses.

As a result of these recommendations, the “buildout” configuration of our school system would be as follows, and as illustrated on Map 8-1:

- 1180 student High School with portable classrooms in peak enrollment years
- current Middle School occupied by a 600-750 student grade 7-8 middle school plus preschool, other programs such as “Project Create” and Superintendent’s offices if not located in a separate administration building
- Coombs School remains as 600 student K-6 elementary school
- Three new 600 student K-6 elementary schools, either all located at the Town Hall site, or two at that site and a third at either the Wampanoag Rod & Gun Club site
- Development of a School Department administration building adjacent to the Town Hall and proposed Town Hall school site.